

HB 2646
Committee on Judiciary
TESTIMONY
February 19, 2020
SUPPORT

Chairman Patton and Members of the Committee,

The Kansas Coalition Against Sexual and Domestic Violence (KCSDV) is a statewide non-profit organization whose membership is the 26 sexual and domestic violence programs serving victims across Kansas. KCSDV provides information; training; and analysis and policy work on issues impacting victims of domestic and sexual violence, their families, and their communities.

KCSDV supports the passage of HB2646. According to a recently released report from the Urban Indian Health Institute (UIHI) outlining the crisis of missing and murdered indigenous women and children.¹ This report is titled “Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (MMIWG): A Snapshot of 71 Cities in the United States” and was released in 2018. This report shines light on the growing problems of MMIWG and also on the lack of data collected on this growing problem. Even with inaccurate data and the known reluctance in reporting, **506 cases** of missing and murdered indigenous women and girls were identified in these 71 cities.

What we do know is that murder is the third leading cause of death for American Indian/Alaskan Native women. Also known through the report from UIHI, is the identification of 506 unique cases of missing and murdered American Indian and Alaska Native women and girls across the 71 selected cities—128 (25%) were missing persons cases, 280 (56%) were murder cases, and 98 (19%) had an unknown status.² Many of the missing were linked to cases of domestic violence and sexual assault.

In Kansas, we need to join other states with tribal land and populations. Many indigenous people no longer live on tribal land and choose to live in urban areas. Other states are attempting to identify this problem – in impact and scope. We urge Kansas to pass HB 2646 to join these states in attempting to identify this problem and develop policies and training practices to impact this devastating trend.

Sincerely submitted on behalf of KCSDV,

Sara Rust-Martin, JD, MSW
Legal and Policy Director
KCSDV

¹ This report is the second of the Our Bodies, Our Stories series. Go to UIHI.org to read the first report regarding sexual violence against Native women in Seattle, Washington. Published by Urban Indian Health Institute (UIHI) (2018)

² *Id.*